

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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AGRICULTURE

FARMERS, HOLD YOUR COTTON.

This is the Advice of President Harvie Jordan, of the Cotton Growers' Protective Association, and of Secretary Parker, of the Farmers' State Alliance—Meeting Called.

On his return from Edgecombe County last week, Secretary T. B. Parker, of the North Carolina Farmers' State Alliance, sent out a circular letter to secretaries of County Alliances, from which we make the following extract:

"I found there [in Edgecombe] as well as elsewhere in the State a short cotton crop as compared with last year's crop, also a disposition to hold cotton after it went below ten cents a pound. With unity of action I believe the farmers can get ten cents for their cotton if they will hold for that price. I have written Mr. Harvie Jordan, of Georgia, President of the Cotton Growers' Association, in regard to the matter and have suggested that he at once communicate with the cotton farmers of the South and urge them to hold their cotton for ten cents. As soon as I hear from him I will publish his conclusions so that our farmers may act in concert with the farmers of all the cotton growing States. In the meantime I urge every farmer, whether he belongs to the Alliance or not, to stand with us for a minimum price of ten cents per pound.

"I also advise against selling tobacco at present low prices. Let all, who possibly can, hold their tobacco until there is a market for it at paying prices. There is nothing to lose by holding (for it is now selling for less than cost of production), but, in my opinion, much is to be gained. Plan to materially curtail the crop for next year. In the place of tobacco arrange to plant crops that can be consumed on the farm. It will be better to let the land rest than to spend a year cultivating a crop that will not pay cost of production."

Mr. Parker has since received a reply from President Jordan, which we give in full herewith:

PRESIDENT JORDAN'S ADVICE.

Monticello, Ga., Oct. 5, 1903.

Mr. T. B. Parker, Secretary North Carolina Farmers' State Alliance, Raleigh, N. C.

My Dear Sir:—I am just in receipt of your favor of the 2nd inst.,

and you voice my views exactly. For the past month I have begun an active campaign throughout the South advocating higher prices for our great staple crop, placing the minimum price at which it should be sold at ten cents a pound. I would be pleased to have your active cooperation in this matter. Cotton is much too low at the present time, and the depression is largely due to the rush of the raw material on the markets by the producers. The crop will be a short one. There will not be enough cotton made to last the mills for another twelve months, and those who hold and market slowly will get the cream of better prices later on. Let us all work for at least tent a pound.

"With best wishes, I beg to remain,
Yours truly,

"HARVIE JORDAN,
Pres. Southern Cotton Growers' Protective Association."

Just in this connection we think it quite worth while to re print a very judicious and thoughtful editorial in last week's Newton Enterprise. Says Editor Williams:

AS A NEWSPAPER MAN SEES IT.

"The sudden drop a few weeks ago of a cent and a half on cotton was a great surprise to Southern farmers. It was also a disappointment. The only explanation that anybody makes of it is, that the farmers are marketing it so fast that the quantity offered is beating down the price. All the reports from the cotton States agree that there cannot be any larger crop harvested than the last one, which was 10,750,000. It is more likely to fall under these figures, because it is three weeks late and no top crop can be expected. Besides, there has been deterioration in the condition from various causes. There will be more cotton needed by the mills next year than this, because their supplies have been exhausted and the demand for cotton goods is growing greater every year. The prices now ruling, 9¼ to 9½ cents, are likely to last only through the fall months while there is a rush by the farmers to sell their cotton and pay their summer-made store-bills. A little later, when the pressure is over, and the sales begin to drop off, there will be a scramble among the mill men to lay in supplies. People who hold back some cotton till next year are likely to get better prices. Of course this is only an opinion. The future price

of cotton is a thing that puzzles a good portion of the people of this country; in fact nearly everybody in the South. Any poor fellow could become a capitalist within a year, if he only knew what cotton would sell at six or nine months hence. But we are all in the same boat. The farmer does not know, and he hesitates whether to sell or to hold; the manufacturer does not know, and hesitates about filling his warehouses or buying only as he needs the cotton. The speculator does not know, and is puzzled as to whether to buy or sell cotton for future delivery. If some only knew, would they not feather their nests? Under the uncertainty, the speculator is likely to buy some and sell some futures, the manufacturers are likely to fill some warehouses and leave some empty. The farmers had better act on the same cautious plan; sell some at the present prices, and hold some to see how the scale is going to turn."

Charlotte Cotton Talk.

Comparatively little county cotton is now being sold, only 384 bales being marketed last week. The receipts for the first week in October of last year were 11,103 bales.

The prominent farmers of the county say that owing to the scarcity of labor and the high wages paid for what is obtained, the cost of raising cotton has increased from 1 to 3 cents per pound during the past two or three years. A few years ago nine cents per pound was a large price for the staple, but the conditions have changed and there is no more profit in raising it at that price now than there was at the smaller prices three years ago.

Cotton Inspector Robert Simpson says that the grade of the cotton received this year is the best he has ever seen. The staple has been opening rapidly and the farmers have been getting it picked as rapidly. There has been no rain to stain it, and all the cotton sold for the past weeks has been strict good middling.

As erratic as the cotton market is known to be, there has been nothing more phenomenal in its history than the rapidity of the recent decline from 14 to 9 cents. The Observer has recently heard one cotton man predict, and another agree with him, that, after a while, there will be an advance equally as violent. But that is another story. Nobody ever knows what cotton is going to do.—Charlotte Observer.

IMPORTED COTTON SEED.

A Texas Idea to Head Off the Boll Weevil.

New Orleans, Oct. 8.—The committee having charge of the boll weevil convention to be held in Dallas, Tex., has changed the date for the convention to November 5 so as to assure the presence of delegates from all parts of the country.

At the suggestion of the committee having charge of the convention Texas roads have agreed to haul cotton seed for planting to Texas from any of the non-infected States for less than half the usual rate. The idea prevails that if the seed is brought from other States, particularly from the more northerly cotton States, there is less likelihood of the staple being attacked by the weevil. As a consequence most farmers in the infected region propose to plant seed brought all the way from North Carolina, the cotton State furthest removed from Texas. The North Carolina cotton matures early and it is thought that in this way it will be possible to head off the ravages of the weevil.

Cotton Crop is Ten Million Bales.

Montgomery, Ala., Oct. 9.—Ten million, two hundred and seventy-one bales is the estimate of the present cotton crop, made by the Association of Southern Commissioners of Agriculture which adjourned here to-day.

The association passed a resolution looking to the prevention of the importation of the boll weevil from Texas. It is urged that no cotton material be brought from Texas so long as the weevil is known to be in the State.

As the cotton crop is being gathered it develops that the crop is shorter than at first supposed in this county. The average will not be over two-thirds of a crop.

Several of the farmers in this county went into the tobacco business this year as an experiment. A man was employed to direct the cultivation, the farmers not being familiar with its culture, as none was ever raised in the county before. The crop was very fine. It looks like our lands are well adapted to its growth. But the price has been so low and the returns so small compared with the expense that it is safe to say it will be many days before any more tobacco is grown in Richmond County.—Rockingham dispatch.